



Health Career Directory

Recreational Assistant

Overview

Recreational assistants work in a team based environment to carry out recreation programs in consultation with the Recreational Therapist.

Recreational assistants work in a variety of health care facilities. They work under the supervision of a recreational therapist to help aging, disabled or injured individuals. Through careful observation, assessments, and activity planning, recreational assistants help their clients to improve their health through physical activity and mental stimulation. The work of a recreational assistant helps others to live a fuller, healthier life by participating in leisure activities and gaining their independence.

Some of the main duties of a recreational assistant include:

- Organizing and overseeing residents on outings
- Coordinating moving residents to and from the activity
- Demonstrating techniques of recreation activities
- Carrying out prescribed adaptations to recreational activities to help residents to maintain maximum potential independence

Who is suited for this type of occupation?

Recreational assistants are most effective when they have the following skills and characteristics:

- ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing
- ability to deal with others effectively
- ability to create and maintain a relationship with clients
- patience, empathy and a genuine interest in promoting their independence of others
- ability to provide self-care instruction and education
- ability to utilize variety of computer software applications
- ability to organize work
- good health and physical stamina
- a clean record, no prior criminal background.

They should enjoy:

- working in a fast paced health care environment
- have a genuine interest in caring for people
- assisting others in a pace and stressful environment
- working collaboratively with others in a team environment
- using standard and specialized equipment to gather assessments to provide proper care

Who employs recreational assistants?

Recreational assistants work in rural and urban centers in the following settings:

- hospital/acute care settings
- nursing home or residential care
- rehabilitation units/centers
- youth assessment centers
- mental health centers
- adult day centers
- correctional facilities
- privately run physiotherapy clinics
- doctor's offices.

The positions they hold vary. Some common examples include:

- Recreation Aides/Assistants
- Program Planners
- Recreation Leaders
- Activity Workers
- Activity Programmers
- Recreation Therapist (in some settings)

The primary employers for recreational assistant are BC's Health Authorities both in rural and urban centers. Their hours of work are rotating shift hours, which includes weekend, evenings, and night shift work. They may be exposed to diseases and must wear protective clothing, such as rubber gloves and masks in some work environments.

Salary

Salary - hourly range \$20.11 – \$22.96

Required Training and Education to Become a Recreational Assistant

British Columbia offers several recreational therapist programs for students who wish to obtain a four-year degree or a two-year diploma in this field. Please go to the list of institutions below for the admission requirements to each of the programs.

Resources

Education Programs

Douglas College

<http://www.douglas.bc.ca/programs/therapeutic-recreation/diploma.html>

Okanagan College

<http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/>

Financial assistance and bursaries:

For information about Canada student loans and grants, please visit:

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/learning/canada_student_loan/index.shtml

Association

BCTRA – British Columbia Therapeutic Recreation Association

<http://www.bctra.org/>